

# Section 11: Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments

## Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments are measures put in place to help ensure that every student has an equal chance to succeed in their exams. They are especially important for learners who have additional needs. These adjustments are carefully considered and must be supported by appropriate evidence to meet the criteria set by examination boards. An example of the most commonly approved Access Arrangements are listed below:

- Extra time and/or supervised rest breaks
- Use of a spellchecker or dictionary
- Alternative method of assessment, for example, an oral examination rather than written
- Reader/Computer reader
- Prompter
- Specialist furniture
- Sympathetic consideration for spelling/grammatical errors
- Coloured overlays
- Audio version of examination papers
- Scribe/Speech recognition technology
- Examination papers on coloured paper
- Enlarged examination papers

## Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments: What Parents Need to Know

Teachers use assessments to monitor your child's progress and tailor teaching to their needs.

In Primary 7, children may sit the Schools Entrance Assessment Group (SEAG) test. If your child has learning difficulties, they could be eligible for extra support - check the [SEAG's website](#) for specific guidance.

Throughout school, students with reading or writing challenges don't always need a formal diagnosis to receive help. The [Joint Council for Qualifications \(JCQ\)](#) oversees Access Arrangements for many qualifications, including GCSEs, A Levels and some BTECs. These supports must be applied for early by the school's Learning Support Coordinator (LSC) and should reflect your child's normal way of working. If your child needs exam accommodations but doesn't have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, further assessment by a qualified specialist may be required. Some qualifications may not follow the JCQ rules and LSCs should check with the relevant awarding bodies.

In sixth form and beyond, students should inform their LSC or college/university support staff about any previous exam arrangements, as support does not automatically carry over.

Strict rules apply to ensure fairness, so it's important to stay informed - guidelines are updated annually and provide the most accurate information on eligibility and procedures.

This Newsletter explains Access Arrangements in more detail: [EA Cognition & Learning - Literacy Newsletter Issue 10: Study Skills and Exam Support](#)

### **Disabled Students' Allowance:**

The Disabled Students' Allowance provides additional funding to help a higher education student with extra costs relating to a disability. To qualify for the Disabled Students' Allowance, a student must have a disability that impacts upon their ability to study and meets the legal definition of disability. This may include a long-term health condition, physical disability, mental health condition or specific learning

difficulty, such as Dyslexia. Evidence of the disability is required, such as a diagnostic assessment report for a student with a formal diagnosis of Dyslexia.

The Disabled Students' Allowance is not means-tested but there are residency and other requirements, for example, a student cannot receive the Disabled Students' Allowance if they are eligible for a Department of Health, NHS or other healthcare bursary. The full regulations governing the Disabled Students' Allowance and an application pack, can be found on the [Student Finance NI website](#). The Disabled Students' Allowance can help eligible students with the costs of:

- Specialist equipment, for example, a laptop with specialist software installed
- Non-medical helpers, for example, a Study Skills Coach
- Extra travel because of a disability
- Other disability-related costs of studying

### **Access to Work:**

[Access to Work \(NI\)](#) is a scheme that primarily helps both people with disabilities who wish to join the workplace and people in work who are experiencing disability-related difficulties. Access to Work (NI) can also help employers to recruit and/or retain people with disabilities as employees.

### **Access Arrangements for the Driving Theory Test:**

There are various adjustments available in the driving theory test for people with reading difficulties, disabilities or health conditions. These include extra time, the use of Text-to-Speech technology, the presence of an oral language modifier and the presence of a reader. Visit [GOV.UK](#) for further information.

### **Workable (NI):**

[Workable \(NI\)](#) is a scheme that offers tailored support to help people with disabilities find and keep work. Support could include one-to-one help from a job coach to help the employee and their colleagues adapt to the needs of the job, extra training for the employer and disability awareness training for the employer/employee's colleagues.

### **Access Arrangements for tests taken at Pearson VUE centres:**

Pearson VUE is a computer-based testing company. There are over one hundred Pearson VUE testing centres across the UK, providing a secure environment for people to sit a wide range of online tests, including work-related certification and licensure exams for various industries. Depending on the online test in question and the needs of the test taker, there are various adjustments that can be provided, such as, extra time, separate invigilation and rest breaks. For further information please visit [Testing Accommodations - Pearson VUE](#).